

Deschutes TMDL & Litigation

Background

The Deschutes River, Percival Creek, and Budd Inlet Tributaries (Phase 1) TMDL study area is located in south Puget in Thurston and Lewis Counties, Washington. The Washington Department of Ecology submitted the final Phase 1 Deschutes TMDL to EPA for approval on December 17, 2015.¹ That document addresses a total of 73 waterbody-pollutant combinations, caused by temperature, dissolved oxygen [DO], pH, fecal coliform, and fine sediment.

Litigation



On September 6, 2017, Northwest Environmental Advocates (NWEA) filed a complaint against EPA alleging violation of section 303(d)(2) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for failure to act on the Deschutes River TMDL submission. Section 303(d)(2) requires EPA to either approve or disapprove a state's TMDL submission within 30 days of submittal.

(b) (5)



Current Status

The CWA requires EPA to either approve or disapprove state-submitted TMDLs, and if we disapprove, we are required to develop a replacement TMDL within 30 days. (b) (5)



Next Steps

A briefing on the proposed TMDL decisions for the RA is currently scheduled for May 21st. In addition, the Region will coordinate with HQ OWOW staff on needed background/briefing materials for AAOW. Once final decisions have been made on the TMDL, the Region will need to work quickly with HQ and the State on the disapproved segments to determine how replacement TMDLs will be developed.

¹ Marine segments (Phase 2, Budd Inlet) are planned for completion in 2020.